

Nancy Atlas, Danny Kean Warm Up Bay Street at Fireside Session

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As the lobby fills at Friday night's Fireside Session with Nancy Atlas, it starts to feel like these weekly concerts are turning into a regular outing for many. Old friends greet each other and go to get drinks at the Bay Street Theatre bar, new friends are made as discussions about the previous week's show mingle with talk about who's seen Danny Kean (this week's guest) perform before.

There is a camaraderie forming among the audience as "regulars" graciously bring new audience members up to date on the rules: Yes, you can take your drinks to your seat, you can go get more drinks, you can dance but it usually doesn't start till after mid-way in the concert, etc. Yes, Fireside Sessions with Nancy Atlas and Friends is clearly becoming a weekly social club, new members are welcome at each show and the only requirement for membership is a love of music and a showing of gratitude and respect for the woman bringing this all together—Nancy Atlas.

Atlas's guest for the week, Danny Kean, a Long Island-based pianist and singer opened the show with the Stevie Wonder tune "If It's Magic." Setting the tone for the evening with his very soulful, funky style right off the bat, Kean also captivated the audience by joking about his blindness and recent surgery to correct the condition. Nancy had called Danny "a lovely person offstage as well" also saying it was a "real treat" to call him a friend. That connection was clear from their banter between songs and shone through the entire evening's performance.

Atlas and band joined Kean for the Atlas original "Mystic," a perfect choice for Kean's piano styling. Atlas and Kean got the crowd going with the Joe Cocker tune "Feelin' Alright," followed by another Kean original "Get with First." Kean then coerced Atlas to start off the Neil Young classic "Heart of Gold," which had them both bringing their own personalities to this well-known tune.

The remainder of the show included two more Kean originals, "23 Hours" and "Crazy Days," showing off his R&B side and bringing artists such as Stevie Wonder and Al Greene to mind. The Atlas favorite "Real Love" got

the audience on to the dance floor, as did the always very danceable Atlas fan favorite “Galaxy Eyes.” This week’s nod to the Beatles anniversary was a lovely Atlas version of “Hey Jude” with guest Kean’s backup. The dancers didn’t leave the stage for the rest of the show through “It’s Your Thang.” The danceable “Higher Ground” clarified for me that there *is* some sort of blue eyed/Steven Winwood soul vibe coming from Kean. At Atlas’ request everyone took their seats and were satisfied with just swaying to the last number, Bill Wither’s “Lean on Me.” The show ended as all the others have with an enthusiastic standing ovation.